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V I C E, K

A

S A T I R E.

What though the task be arduous, and demand
The chast'ning scourge should arm a master's hand,
Though ablest pow'r, (and mine of small avail)
Though ablest pow'r, and best inspir'd must fail,
Yet let Me do the little that I can,
And ere I die discharge my debt to man.

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[1]

V I C E,

A S A T I R E.

AND what! shall Vice forsake th'obscure of night
A To triumph shameless in the glare of light,
Whilst modest Virtue with dejected head

Sits pining in the solitary shade?

Yes, Vice, exult, thy foes are now no more,
And Virtue's reign, her transient reign, is o'er;
She now with frequent tear bedews the clay
That wraps her Sons too early snatch'd away;

B

O'er

O'er thy sad tomb, O Sterne ! th'afflicted Fair
 Rends, with a frantic hand, her lovely hair,
 With eyes to Heav'n, she bends the suppliant knee,
 And mourns her loss in Churchil, and in Thee.
 Yet oft has Virtue, in thy living hour,
 With grief beheld thy prostituted pow'r,
 When emulous of general applause,
 To court the Vile, by fits you left her cause ;
 Awhile directing Heav'nward flights, and soon
 Unworthy sinking in a base Buffoon.
 Oh ! had you scorn'd that Pow'r, so poor, and low,
 And taught alone the luxury of Woe,
 How pleas'd we'd own'd the influence of your art,
 And bless'd the pen that humaniz'd the heart.
 With honest warmth, see manly Churchil rise,
 Indignant fury flashing from his eyes ;
 His nervous, and unpolish'd lines impart
 The gen'rous feelings of a virtuous heart.
 See Folly dread her destin'd fall to meet,
 See Guilt expire, pale victim, at his feet,

See Dulness fly before the throne of Sense,
 See forc'd, Oh strange! the Blush from Impudence.
 Yet not unstain'd his Page, too oft his Muse
 Confines her rage to Personal Abuse,
 The path forsaking where she first began,
 Neglects the Crime, to stigmatize the Man.

If such Herculean arms as these have fail'd,
 And, spite of Satire, Vice at last prevail'd,
 How with redoubled vigour must she rise!
 Like some rank weed, aspiring to the skies;
 When those ordain'd to check its growth, supply
 A fostering hand, and rear its head on high.
 Such are the Muses, once rever'd above,
 The friends of Truth, and near ally'd to Jove;
 'Twas theirs to give the good man to the sky,
 Or damn the wretch to endless infamy:
 But now no more they own th'inspiring ray,
 And sing their Pæans to the God of day,
 But, banish'd Heav'n, attend the satyr train,
 Themselves lascivious, impotent, and vain.

Oh ! be it mine, to quit the sordid throng,
 Who list to Interest, e'er they tune the Song ;
 Who check'd by mean restraint, or aw'd by fear,
 Ne'er dar'd a Truth that Vice would blush to hear ;
 But ever civil, urge the awkward lie,
 And praise---at sad expence of honesty ;
 Oh ! let me quit them, and with gen'rous rage,
 To wholesome Satire dedicate my page ;
 Apply the lash to villainies I hate,
 And laugh at follies, of the mean, and great ;
 An endless task ! one Vice subdu'd---what then ?
 The Hydra monster gives new birth to ten ;
 But though the task be arduous, and demand
 The chast'ning scourge should arm a master's hand,
 Though ablest pow'r, (and mine of small avail)
 Though ablest pow'r, and best inspir'd must fail,
 Yet let Me do the little that I can,
 And ere I die discharge my debt to man.

Happy were man, if minds to evil prone,
 Would, when they stoop, but stoop to faults alone ;

But

But daring Guilt no limits can confine,
 Rebel to Heaven, it braves the Wrath Divine.
 Behold with giant stride Ambition tow'r,
 His red arm bare, his buskins steep'd in gore;
 With Satan's pride assume the awful Nod,
 Spurn little earth, and emulate a God:
 In his steel'd breast each softer passion dies,
 With all the train of tender amities;
 Fair Meekness droops, unhonour'd, and unhear'd,
 And weeping Pity pours her wail unheard.
 O vain impiety of human-kind,
 O wretch deluded, ignorant, and blind,
 Why would'st thou soar beyond the spot assign'd?
 Ill can thy feeble pow'rs support thy flight,
 Or thy weak eyes endure the blaze of light:
 No, Slave to Passion, and to beastly Lust,
 Thy lot is Mis'ry, and thy station Dust.
 There stalks Oppression o'er the sadden'd plain,
 And blasts the labours of th'industrious Swain;

Who silent weeps the loss of happier days,
 When Toil was recompenc'd, and Worth had praise,
 Ere Wealth broke in with all-subduing rage,
 And Independence sunk to vassalage.
 With hell-born passions burning in his breast,
 And front compos'd, Adult'ry stands confest;
 With curst delight pursues th'ungen'rous aim,
 Boasts the black deed, and glories in his shame,
 While Rape and Murder, joint associates stand,
 And aid the fell design with willing hand.
 Proceed Infernal, but thy God is just,
 And keen remorse attends on lawless lust,
 Thy guilty bosom shall be damn'd to bear
 The hottest Hell that e'er consum'd Despair.
 And You, ye Fair, design'd by Heav'n to prove
 The soft endearments of a nuptial love,
 To bless the Youth your charms have made your own,
 And as ye bless, be bless'd in One alone;
 Why scorn the just restraint, and unconfin'd,
 With vast affection---take in all mankind.

Time was, when simple souls could love for life,
 And the fond Husband had as fond a Wife :
 He, honest fool, could see no face so fair,
 Nor She, such manly grace, and candid air.
 Did Joy, or Grief, disturb the peaceful scene,
 The Joy she heighten'd, and dispel'd the pain ;
 Did ruffling cares Her anxious soul molest,
 His fond attention sooth'd her into rest :
 Thus, hand-in-hand, content, and calmly gay,
 They trod life's path, and strew'd with flow'rs the way ;
 Till Death invited, when, with ceaseless love,
 They left a Heaven on earth, for one above.
 Not such, I ween, the flame that now inspires,
 No bosom burns but with unhallow'd fires ;
 To Hymen's altar, lo ! the crowds repair,
 Where Lust, or Lucre, actuates every Fair.
 Here, slyly, one her virgin passion feigns,
 And joins the Fool her genuine soul disdains ;
 The prudent conduct wherefore should we blame,
 That gives a Fortune, and secures her Fame.

There, in high lust, the matron Dame appears,
 And seeks the able Youth of manly years ;
 Who quits the Virtue that but kept him poor,
 ---The pamper'd Stallion of a titled W---e.

And shall no pang such Loves as these annoy,
 Shall Hymen smile, and bless the couch with joy ?
 No, every curse pursue them when they wed,
 May Discord light the torch, and Furies haunt the bed.
 What Voice of woe is that affails my ear ?
 What Eye that asks my Bounty with a tear ?
 Lo, sunk to earth, a wretched Victim lies,
 Her sum compleat of human miseries,
 Though now, sad Outcast, left expos'd and bare,
 That face was once with fatal beauty fair ;
 Those squalid Limbs with nice proportion just,
 Were once all lovely to the eye of Lust ;
 And Peace once dwelt an inmate of that breast,
 Till treach'rous Love became its baneful guest.
 Though, hapless Fair-one, Virtue is thy foe,
 The Muse, less rigid, shall her tear bestow ;

The sympathying Muse bemoans thy fate,
 Knows thy sad tale, and faithful will relate :
 To honest Industry and Virtue bred,
 Thy Parents own'd the shelter of a shed ;
 Contented Pair ! through many a toilsome day
 They work'd and fung the chearful hours away.
 An only infant blest'd the Mother's knee,
 The Father's fondness center'd all in Thee ;
 And well he hop'd when time should ripen forth
 Thy infant beauties, and disclose thy worth,
 Some neighb'ring Swain, by Love's warm impulse led,
 Should take thee, faithful, to his homely bed ;
 That when exhausted Nature claim'd release,
 And toil-worn Age deserv'd the boon of Ease,
 His hoary years, to thy safe cot retir'd,
 Might calmly pass till Life's last flame expir'd.
 And oh ! what joys he deem'd those years should bring,
 If from thy loves an Infant Race should spring ;

D

How

How amply then were all his cares repaid,
 As with fond eye the Prattlers he survey'd,
 While they around his chair their little gambols play'd.
 Unhappy Man not such was Heav'n's decree;
 Far other doom the Fates reserv'd for thee.
 In luckless hour a fell Destroyer came,
 Love's plea advanc'd, seduction all his aim;
 That plea, in Virtue's guise so well convey'd,
 Ah! soon, deceiv'd the poor unwary Maid;
 With each soft passion throbbing in her breast,
 And Love, that seem'd in Angel form-confest:
 How hard the conflict, ye, who feel it, say,
 Nor you, ye Prudes, despise th'unhappy prey.
 Why must the Muse pursue the painful tale,
 Too soon the Lover's fraudulent wiles prevail;
 Soon fated Lust demands another Fair,
 And leaves the ruin'd Victim to despair;
 Who forc'd with shame to fly a Father's arms,
 Earns bitter bread by prostituted charms;

In Orgies leud consumes the midnight hour,
 Where Riot swells the loud infernal roar ;
 With some old Letcher counterfeits delight,
 And yields to each caprice of beastly appetite.
 But soon each transient beauty fades away,
 And Want, and loath'd Disease consume their prey ;
 Invoking curses with her latest breath,
 She sinks, with guilt and infamy, to death.
 Nor ends the tragedy with one laid low,
 The aged Parents feel as keen a Woe :
 Reft of their Child, by so severe a doom,
 Their grey hairs go with sorrow to the tomb.
 Yet know, vile Wretch, by Passion's whirlwind driv'n,
 To violate the laws of Earth and Heav'n :
 There is an Hour, when her long slumber o'er,
 Dread Conscience shall awake, to sleep no more ;
 When Guilt shall tremble, Guilt that dar'd rebel,
 And Horror fright thee with her hideous yell,
 Go thou, whose bosom burns with hot desire,
 With Lust, insatiate Lust's destructive fire ;

Go, learn thou this : From regulated Sense
 Is all our bliss,---from sober Temperance.
 How much, O Temperance ! to thee we owe,
 What Joys sincere from thy pure fountain flow ;
 Life's most protracted date derives from thee,
 A calm old age, and death from anguish free.

Doth Death affright thee with its dread parade,
 The Hearse flow-moving, and the cavalcade,
 Go, early learn its terrors to despise,
 Read Virtue's lesson, and in time be wise.
 Enough of crimes, on these Heav'n's vengeance wait.
 Let Satire aim at faults of humbler state.

Whoe'r observes, will find in human race,
 More difference of character, than face ;
 Some nice, odd turns, in all, th'Observer strike,
 Each his peculiar has, nor find we two alike.
 Blest with each art that soothes the ills of life,
 A quiet Mind, not made for noise and strife ;
 In whose fixt calm no jarring pow'rs contend,
 Design'd to act, as Husband, Father, Friend ;

Had

Had Philo been content with what was giv'n,
 And, truly wise, enjoy'd on earth his Heav'n;
 Philo had liv'd---but liv'd unknown to fame,
 Had died content--but died without a name.
 No, Philo cry'd, be glorious Praise my care,
 Nor let this name be mix'd with common air;
 For this, he wastes the weary hours of night,
 Leaves peace to Fools, and banishes delight;
 Nature in vain throws in her honest barrs,
 The Wretch runs counter to himself, and stars:
 In vain---for lost no character he seems,
 And Philo does not live, but only dreams.

Others there are, who to the shade retire,
 Who'd shine if Nature would the clods inspire,
 And, as she gave them parts, would give them fire. }
 But languid bodies, scarce inform'd with soul,
 In one dull round their vacant moments roll;
 Heavy, and motionless as Summer seas,
 They yawn out life in most laborious ease;
 Passions, half form'd, in their cold bosoms lye,
 And all the Man is sluggish Anarchy;

Yet Wits, and wife, when some small flocks awake ;
 As when the surface of some stagnant lake,
 Urg'd by the action of the busy Air,
 Breaks its thick scum, and shews the bottom clear.
 Who knows not Florio ? sweet enraptur'd elf !
 Florio is known to all men but himself.
 Him Folly own'd the instant of his birth,
 And tun'd his soul to nonsense and to mirth ;
 Nor boasts a son, in all her dancing croud,
 So pert, so prim, so petulant, and proud.
 Mixture absurd and strange ! we find in him
 Dulness with Wit, Sobriety with Whim ;
 A soul that sickens at each rising art
 With the mean malice of a coward's heart.
 So milky soft, so pretty, and so neat,
 With air so gentle, and with voice so sweet ;
 What Dog-star's rage, what maggot of the brain,
 Could make a Fop so impudently vain,
 To throw all modesty aside, and fit
 The mighty Cenfor of the works of Wit ?

Say

Say Wretch, what pride could prompt thee to bestow }
 Abuse on Pow'r, the greatest pow'r below, }
 The Muses pow'r? that pow'r thyself shall know : }
 Her Pen shall add thee to the long, long, roll,
 That holds the name of ev'ry brother Fool.
 Of various passions that divide the breast,
 Pride reigns supreme, and governs all the rest;
 Its form is vary'd, but to all supply'd.
 In equal shares, however modify'd.
 Blest source of action whose perpetual strife
 With sluggish Nature, warms us into life;
 Thou great, first Mover, 'tis alone from thee
 That Life derives its sweet diversity.
 Yet hapless he, whose ill-directed pride,
 With soft seduction draws his steps aside
 From Life's low vale, where humbler joys invite;
 With bold, rash tread, to gain Distinction's height :
 Him Peace forsakes, and endless toils oppose,
 A Friend's defection, and the spleen of Foes;
 Black Calumny invents her thousand lies,
 And sickly Envy blasts him if he rise----

He, Wretch accurs'd, ty'd down to servile rules,
 Must think and act no more like other Fools :
 For him no more that social ease remains
 Which sweetens life, and softens all its pains ;
 Each jealous eye betrays a Critic's ken,
 To search for faults it spares in other men.
 How shall he wish in vain, once more his own,
 That Hour when free, and to the world unknown,
 Its praise he had not, nor could fear its frown.

Oh ! let me still, in humble station blest,
 Esteem what Heav'n bestows, bestow'd as best,
 May Pride ne'er prompt one secret wish to rise
 Where Honour, Virtue, or where Truth denies ;
 May never lust of Wealth, or Pow'r betray
 My backward step to Fortune's slipp'ry way.
 Much Heav'n hath giv'n---in gratitude I bend---
 Much, much hath giv'n me, for it gave a Friend :
 Gave me a --- in whose manly soul
 No little thought exerts its base controul,
 The Friend of human-kind, whose gen'rous heart
 In sorrows, not its own, still shares a part.

Oh !

Oh ! be thou mine 'till Life its clay resigns,
 Thy Breast the pillow where my Soul reclines.
 And if, in luckless Hour, so weak I prove,
 With mean Distrust, to doubt the Friend I love :
 To doubt the Friend whose honest bosom bears
 Balm for my wounds, and solace for my cares,
 When I descend so low (O just Decree !)
 May Heav'n collect its ev'ry wrath for me.
 May I be damn'd to prove the Coward's fate,
 To cringe to Fools and flatter those I hate ;
 And to fair Honour's call awake no more,
 Pollute my soul with love of dirty Ore.
 May Life's slow sands ebb tediously away,
 And I but live to execrate the day.
 May ev'ry comfort leave me when I die,
 And Virtue curse with tears, my blasted Memory.



Oh! how often mine will this its clay receive,
I lay down the pillow where my soul receives
And it in locketh, to wait I prove,
With mean I strive, to doubt the Friend I love
To doubt the Friend whose necked bottom bears
Lies for my wounds, and place for my cares,
When I descend to low (O just Torment)
May Heaven collect its own worth for me,
May I be damn'd to prove the Coward's face,
To charge to Fools and Rascals that I hate;

To charge my soul with love's just Torment,
May Life's low lands (O just Torment)
And I but live to execute the law,
May every comfort leave me when I die,
And Virtue curse with tears, my blighted name.



